



AN OXYGEN EXPOSÉ.

TO THE MEDICAL PROFESSION:

I am much interested in the subject, Oxygen as a remedial agent, and to it am devoting study, theoretical and practical, as, I have reason to believe, are many medical men. Many of our cities have oxygen specialists, who are doing good in the world. It is but natural that impostors or ignorant pretenders should invade this important branch of medical work, just as they do all other branches. This letter is for the purpose of exposing one such swindle on the profession and the public—whether perpetrated through ignorance, or viciousness, or neither, or both, I am not prepared to say, as, indeed, it is not necessary to specify; your medico-legal minds may adjudicate the matter to your individual satisfaction.

Early last summer Dr. Amos L. Lennard came to this city, rented an office, and began business as an oxygen specialist, advertising his treatment in the daily papers. About the same time other parties established a so-called "oxygen parlor," and in a few months Dr. Lennard evidently found that the field was not large enough for two. As he knew of my interest in the subject, he offered to sell me his whole outfit, especially as he had "just received an appointment as Medical Examiner in the Pension Bureau at Washington," and was about to leave this city to accept the position, and, consequently, had no use for the oxygen apparatus. The price asked was \$200, and finally came down to \$100. I have long been anxious to know how I can furnish patients with oxygen in a bottle for home use in an inhaler, and to know what combination of chemicals will

do the work. I know of but one such solution (*vide* my article in *Chicago Medical Era*, July, 1885, p. 10), but it is rather too expensive for free use. Dr. Lennard was positive that he had the Starkey & Palen formulas (obtained from their discharged drunken chemist, Scott, by name,) for "office treatment" and "home treatment," and had tested them for several years with satisfaction to all concerned. So, feeling that I could not lose much on the plant, anyway, I bought the formulas, and the whole apparatus for manufacturing, storing, and administering the oxygen treatment on quite a large scale, and the doctor assisted at its installment in one of my office rooms. When I had seen the formulas, I said, "In what is this office treatment different from laughing gas?" and he said, "Why, they are not at all alike." I then took down a work on chemistry and showed the doctor his mistake, and he had nothing to say, and left the city the next day. It is needless, perhaps, to say that I have repudiated the "treatments," and fallen back upon my own resources—our standard chemistry and medical authors—for information.

The "doctor" was to send me a "treatise," composed by him, bearing on the treatments. Part of my payment was by note, to insure delivery of treatise. It fell due in a month, and payment was refused, because treatise had not been delivered. Mr. F. G. McGranaghan, of Champaign, Ill., now wrote, as owner of the note, and sent on the treatise, and I paid the note—probably a foolish act—but I did it. I wrote McGranaghan (~~possibly an alias for Lennard, surely a go-between and peddler,~~) an exposé of the miserable fraud, and he wrote me again, Sept. 16, stating: "The doctor has the Oxygen treatment in his office here, and is using it with satisfaction and benefit to his many patrons."

So, the doctor did not accept a position in the Pension Bureau at Washington, as said all the local papers when he left here, but, being under no promise not to resume the treatment elsewhere, he has bobbed up serenely in the town of the convivial name, in the Sucker State, with the old familiar dodge.

As I am likewise under no promise not to divulge my information, I herein furnish all who read, "free, gratis, for nothing," the great Lennard formulas. Punctuation, spelling, capitalizing are as he wrote, and poorly wrote. The originals may be seen at any time by any one.

"COMP. OXYGEN TREATMENT.

R

Nitrate Amonia 25 parts.
Carbnate Ferri 1 part.

Mix Put in Retort, apply gentle heat, till whole Compound becomes to a boiling heat, then add heat gradually, and conduct Oxygen to the Tank.

HOME TREATMENT OF OXYGEN.

R

Nitrate Amonia 1 ounce.
Chlorate Potassa 1 dram.
Alcohol 2 ounces.
Aqua Disliled 14 ounces.

Mix. one teaspoonfull to Inhaler full of hot water. Inhale 2 or 3 times a day."

As to the above "office treatment," a glance at the formula shows it to be nothing but "laughing gas." The carbonate of iron is simply a blind, skillful or bungling, as the case may seem; in other words, to give color to the chemicals and to the boiling liquid, and thus render them less easy of recognition. It does not modify the ultimate product. (Not entirely satisfied with my own conviction on this point of modification, I have consulted two chemists, both professors of chemistry in medical colleges, one here and one in Chicago, and each say that I am right.) Dr. Lennard's office oxygen treatment is nothing but laughing gas, and an impure article of that, as his gas passed through three wash-bottles, containing nothing but water. As nitrate of ammonia sometimes has muriate of ammonia in it, the very injurious and highly dangerous chlorine may be evolved, so one wash-bottle should contain caustic potassa or soda to corral the chlorine. Too great heat may drive over nitric oxide, or even nitric acid, even more dangerous than chlorine, so one wash-bottle should have ferrous sulphate to stop them.

Another little fact in relation to the doctor's formula, evidently far beyond his kemikal ken, but of little importance in this connection, is that, practically there is no such thing as "Carbnate Ferri," for carbonate of iron almost at once changes to oxide of iron.

Pure nitrogen protoxide, nitrous oxide, dephlogistigated nitrous gas, paradise, or laughing gas, is $36\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. oxygen, has a *sweetish taste*, and three or four very deep inhalations will sometimes be enough to produce anæsthesia. In Woodman and Tidy, 1877, p. 489, we read: "It is to be remembered that nitrous oxide can not act as a substitute for oxygen, and that undiluted it acts speedily as a poison."

Oxygen is *tasteless*, and may be respired a little while without causing uneasiness. I mention this partial comparison for the benefit of the Champaign Suckers, in case they wish to more critically investigate their local gasometer.

As to the "home treatment," it seems almost needless to say that oxygen can not be evolved that way. About all the evolving that is done is to evolve \$10 a treatment from the pockets of deluded victims.

According to Dr. Lennard's statement, he has sold out once in Iowa, once in Michigan, once in Illinois, and now I report once in Indiana. If I have been "nipped," I am not ashamed to own it. I should like to buy up every "Oxygen Treatment" in the land, and, if it was not meritorious, to expose it, but I fear the labor would be herculean. Will not those physicians who have had experience along this line come out from the shadow of personal discomfiture and contribute their mite, and thus make "snide" oxygen-treatment formulas so common that there will be no sale for them, in the profession or out of it, and thus raise a perfect wall of protection. About the only protection now is to have nothing to do with any of them, but this plan has its objections, in that we would lose the grain of good wheat in the bushel of chaff. Oxygen has its uses and a future, and it has been truly said by Dr. Wallian, "A cheap supply of oxygen would be more valuable to the world than the discovery of a score of silver mines."

WM. B. CLARKE, M. D.

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